Common Minimum Programme to bring down fiscal deficit

965. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's Common Minimum Programme envisages to bring down the fiscal deficit currently from 5.9 per cent to below 4 per cent, to control inflation and lowering of current Sales Tax as well as current high interest rates in the country; and

(b) if so, the concrete steps taken so far or proposed to be taken by Government during 1996-97, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) The Common Minimum Programme has envisaged, inter-alia, bringing down the fiscal deficit to below 4 per cent of GDP; maintaining price stability, continuation of tax reforms, and restricting on the public borrowings.

(b) Detailed guidelines have been issued to observe fiscal prudence and austerity. Other measures are to be found in the Budget for 1996-97.

Study Group of RBI to Examine Sale of Assets of Sick Public Sector Companies

966. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Reserve Bank of India had constituted a study Group to examine the issue of sale of assets of sick Public Sector Companies in the country particularly in the State of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, whether the Group has submitted its report; if so, what are the salient features of its recommendations; and

(c) what final decision has been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF COMAPNY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that it has constituted a small 'group' comprising of senior executives from Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI), RBI and State Bank of India (SBI) to consider the suggestion for setting up of an independent organisation for undertaking the functions of sale of assets of sick industrial companies recommended for winding up by the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) under the provisions of Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985 (SICA). The 'group' in its report has recommended that a new organisation in the form of a limited company may be constituted to deal with the matters relating to sale of assets of sick industrial comapnies as ordered by the BIFR. No final decision has been taken on the recommendation made by the 'group'

RRBs in Rural Areas of Gujarat

967. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Regional Rural Banks functioning in the rural areas of Gujarat and the total deposits and working capital thereof separately;

(b) the number of people from rural areas benefited by these banks and the amount of loans disbursed during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) whether Government have received any complaints in regard to irregularities in these banks during the above period;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government in this regard; and

(e) the steps being taken by Government to make these banks more effective?